

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5071

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government & Tribal Affairs

Title: An act relating to the state endemic mammal.

Brief Description: Designating the Olympic marmot the official endemic mammal of the state of Washington.

Sponsors: Senator Jacobsen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Affairs: 3/24/09 [DP].

<p>Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designates the Olympic Marmot as the state endemic mammal.
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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Armstrong, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Flannigan, Hurst and Miloscia.

Staff: Pam Madson (786-7111)

Background:

Washington confers an official designation on various symbols in a number of categories. Washington has an official state tree, grass, flower, fruit, marine mammal, bird, fish, insect, and fossil.

The Olympic Marmot is a mammal endemic only to Washington. Olympic Marmots inhabit the Olympic Peninsula in the western part of Washington. They hibernate from September to May but are highly social animals that are relatively easy to see in the summer months.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill:

The Olympic Marmot is designated as the official state endemic mammal.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Olympic Marmot is an endemic mammal found only in Washington. It lives only in the alpine zone of the Olympic National Park. They are very smart mammals. They live in groups that include one male, two adult females, and offspring. Their hibernation lasts three to nine months. They move in underground tunnels that connect their burrows. They can be observed around Hurricane Ridge. The Olympic Marmot is a unique species found only in the Olympic Peninsula. It is one of 14 different species worldwide with six of the 14 found in North America. The population has decreased over time due to habitat changes associated with climate change and an increase in known predators. It is important for Washington citizens to be aware of this rare and unique animal. The work of these elementary students is an example of environmental education using science learning through reporting and observing.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Jacobsen, prime sponsor; Caroline Malone, Claire Demorest, Nick Jansen, Gabe Briggs, Erin Cunningham, Garrett Lawrence, and Kelly Clark, Wedgwood School; Jim Kenagy, University of Washington Burke Museum; and Margaret Tudor, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Pacific Education Institute.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.